

Guidelines for the Scheme
Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan
(As Revised on 24.11.2010)

1. Title of The Scheme: Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan

2. Background:

The entrance of elected women representatives (EWRs) and elected youth representatives (EYRs) into the grassroots polity through elections to the PRIs in massive numbers is a relatively new political phenomenon in India.

Through the provision in the 73rd Constitutional Amendment for the reservation of one-third of total elective seats for women in all three tiers of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, the number of grassroots women, who have come to positions of elective responsibility is around 10 lakhs. While this is a revolutionary change, the actual bald fact is that the majority of these women continue to be hampered by capacity and knowledge shortfalls and institutional, political and societal constraints. Most elected women representatives (EWRs) being first-timers, lack technical knowledge and administrative skills. Their own lack of self-confidence makes it difficult for the EWRs to maneuver an unfriendly bureaucratic and administrative landscape leading them to exercise their powers only tentatively. This further leads to an ambiguous relationship with local officialdom where family-based patriarchy or societal negatives such as the patron-client relationship is transposed and duplicated. There is also a lack of political awareness leaving the EWRs emasculated and unable to confidently assert their positive instincts, leaving them in a State of psychological and administrative limbo. The need to positively address the special needs of EWRs assumes an increasing urgency in the face of the mounting demands placed on them in view of increasing financial allocations and work responsibilities of the PRIs.

There has also been no concerted or coordinated effort for building a movement for involving youth in Panchayat functioning. Across the country, with successive elections, panchayats are getting progressively younger leadership and representatives. The number of youth in the age group of 13-35 years, as per the 2001 census, was estimated at about 41 crore, which is anticipated to increase to about 51 crore by the year 2016. The availability of human resources of such magnitude for achieving socio-economic change needs commensurate infrastructure and suitable priorities to maximize contribution to national development. Today roughly 41.37% of male PRI leaders come under the category of youth. Out of 17, 39, 891 male elected representatives in November 2006, a full 7,19,847 were youth while figures for women are 4,44, 030 (42.61%) out of 10,42, 179 EWRs. These vibrant and valuable youth

partners are already included in the process of national planning and development. The remaining youth of the country similarly need to be empowered to effectively participate in the process of decision making at all levels. Having an emphasis on youth in panchayats is an immeasurable advantage. Youth can make a clean break from the past, to adopt the values of equality and secularism to create a society that is just and fair. This is an area where the Ministry proposes to take a lead and create a movement aimed at greater linkage between Youth and the Panchayats.

In order to address the empowerment of EWRs and EYRs in a systematic, programmatic manner and not rely on ad hoc and sporadic interventions the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India, proposes a new scheme entitled the **Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan** to be introduced in the 11th Five Year Plan. The scheme has two components namely,

- a) Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan and
- b) Panchayat Yuva Shakti Abhiyan

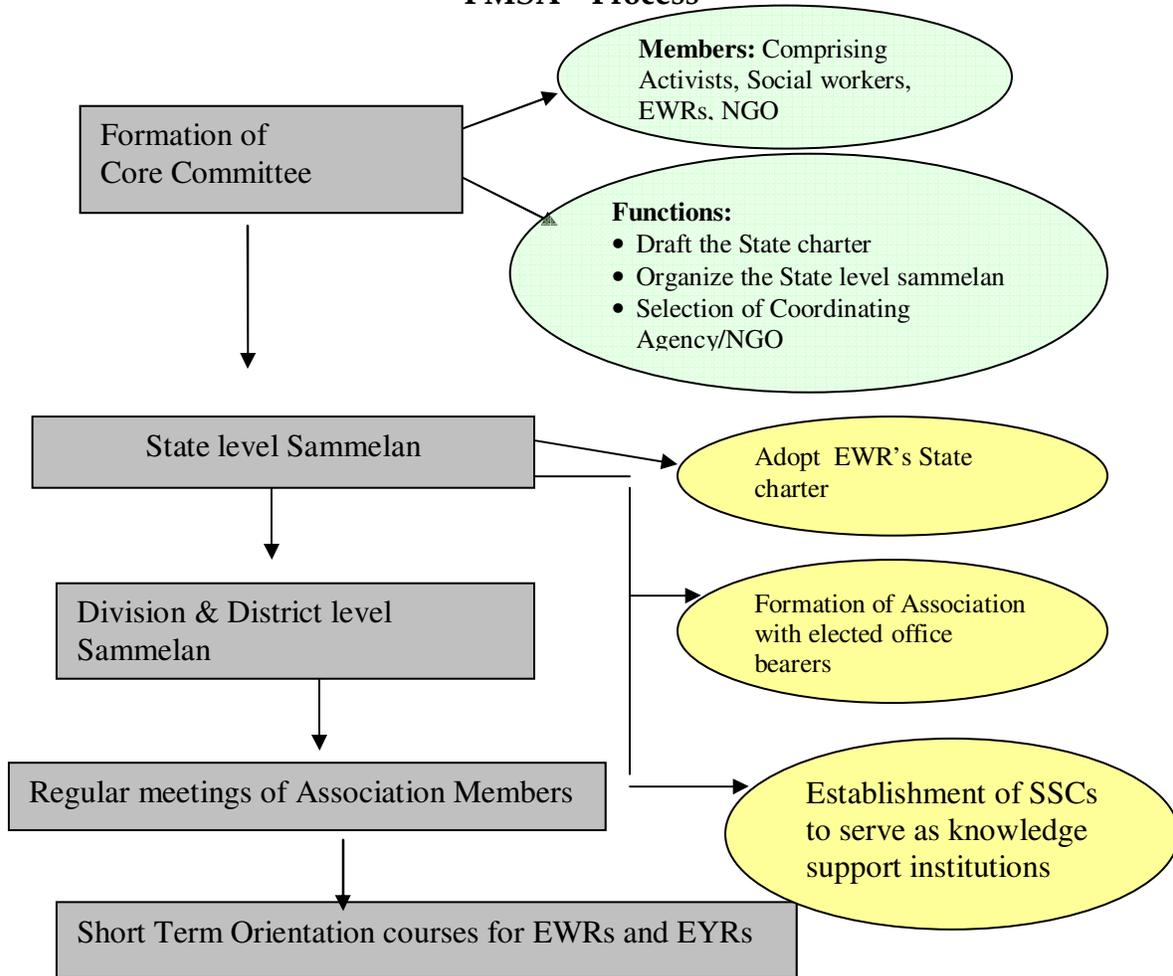
I. Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan (PMSA)

The **objective** of the Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan is to enable women Panchayat leaders to come together to:

- i. Articulate their problems as women Panchayat leaders,
- ii. Discuss issues regarding the institutional mechanisms for their empowerment ,
- iii. Come up with a charter of issues to be mainstreamed into policy and advocacy support so that their concerns are addressed by the process of development adopted by the State and the three-tier PRI system, and
- iv. Form an association of the EWRs with elected office bearers and with cascading representation of EWRs from the district level and divisional level EWRs organizations.

The **activities** planned in this programme are designed to reduce the gaps in accessing opportunities between the male and female elected representatives. The *modus operandi* of the PMSA is to organize 2 or 3-day large scale residential camps or Sammelans of the EWRs such that they forge a sisterhood based on their newly acquired identities.

PMSA - Process



The process in detail is as follows:

1. Formation of Core Committees

Each State Government will constitute a Core Committee comprising activists, feminists, social workers, NGO workers, EWRs and those interested in issues of participatory governance who should first meet, discuss the issues relating to the EWRs and draft a Women's Charter listing both their commitments, their issues and their demands. The State specific charter will lay down the road map for taking forward the Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan in the State.

(a) Role of the Core Committee: Once the sammelan is concluded the Core Committee will steer the momentum generated to assist in creation of an association of EWRs, if not formed during the sammelan, of both past and present representatives. The Core Committee ceases to exist after one year (2008-09) so as to allow the Associations to exercise power and authority. During this period (2007-09) in each State, the Core Committee will convene two meetings annually to assist the Association, provide knowledge and networking support and provide mid course correctives.

(b) **Role of the Convener of the Core Committee:** The Convener of the PMSA Core Committee will act as a bridge between the Elected Representatives and the State Government as well the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. She/He has the responsibility to organize the Core Committee meeting in coordination with the State Government to facilitate the drafting of the State Charter. The Convener is also responsible for preparing the agenda for the meeting, capture the discussion during the meeting, and prepare the report or minutes of the meeting and circulate it among its members. During the state level sammelan it is the duty of the Convener to manage the sessions with the help of the Core Group members as well as the State Government. After the state level sammelan, it is also the responsibility of the Convener to organize regular meetings so as to facilitate the formation of Association at the State level

2. State Sammelan

A State level Sammelan will be organized in each State where the elected women representatives will assemble together for 2-3 days to debate, discuss and deliberate on the issues that affects them as Panchayati Raj representatives. The sammelan would be a residential event in each State wherein all the EWRs (Zilla Pramukhs, Panchayat Samiti Pradhans and at least 5-10 women Sarpanchs) from every district of the State will be represented. The initial day would be reserved for women sarpanchs from districts to meet, gather and speak in an atmosphere of informality and warmth. On the second day, the group will be joined by women Pradhans (Panchayat Samiti) and Women Zilla Pramukhs who will join together to finalize the draft charter of EWRs of the State.

(i) Formation of Association:

One of the major outcomes of the State level Sammelan is the formation of the State level Association with elected office bearers amongst the EWRs. Due representation will be given women belonging to SCs/STs/OBCs in the Executive/Management Committees of the Association. The Association is to provide the main knowledge support to the EWRs during times of uncertainty and knowledge gaps. The Association would hire some minimal knowledge support workers who can fill the knowledge and information gap for EWRs when they require the same, help trouble shoot, help as resource persons and provide information on attendant issues like free legal aid, accounts and record keeping support, techniques of social audit etc. There will be an elected Executive Body of the EWR Association, elected during the sammelan, or just subsequent to it, which may register itself, decide on its institutional form, charge membership fees, and decide on the detailed activities which it may undertake in order to fulfill its mandate. The Executive Body of the Association will also prepare a structure for the Association e.g., State Management Committee, Divisional and District Committees, etc. and mentor the same.

The Executive Body of the Association will also manage the State Support Centres with the support of and experience of persons from the open market and implementing voluntary organizations as well as the NYKS and Youth Associations.

The above Committees are not parallel bodies/committees to undermine the functioning of the Panchayati Raj Institutions. The State, Division and District level Committees mentioned above will facilitate the creation of a network of elected women representatives who would improve the functioning and viability of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) through their influence and vantage position over policy decisions. The objective is to create a forum where the EWRs can freely talk about issues faced by them as elected representatives, which will in turn enable them to voice their ideas, concerns and priorities in the local panchayat meetings with greater efficiency and to use the strength of the women collectives to improve gender relations within family and society as also increase the bargaining power of the EWRs. Since the panchayats have to be actively engaged in local level plan formulation and implementation, discussions on alternative development models on gender etc. will help the EWRs to be creatively engaged in discussions and decision-making. The effort is to create a broad based leadership of women at the Panchayat level for the success and efficacy of democracy at the village level.

(ii) Role of the Association:

- To raise the collective voice of EWRs against gender injustice, child exploitation, untouchability, land alienation and acquisition, encroachments etc. and other relevant issues.
- To forward the resolutions passed by the EWR Association to the State government for necessary action.
- Participate in seminars organized by the State government or other agencies and disseminate the knowledge therein
- Prepare action plans to strengthen the Association including the process of election of the Association for democratic participation of the EWRs.
- Provide knowledge support to the EWRs as well as handholding support as and when required through the State Support Centres.

3. Selection of Coordinating Agencies/NGOs

During/after the State level sammelan and with State Government approval a State level coordinating Agency/NGO with experience and credibility in Panchayati Raj issues and with sufficient infrastructural facilities will be identified to carry forward the mission of the Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan (PMSA). These include providing administrative and support services to the PMSA Association of the State in undertaking its mandate. Such Agencies can also be private service providers selected from a panel technically qualified by Ministry of Panchayati Raj through financial bidding for capacity building/training, sensitization programmes etc. for EWRs and EYRs. The releases of financial assistance for implementation of the programme will, however, be continued to be made to the concerned State / UT Government.

4. Division/District level Sammelan

Division/District level Sammelan will follow the State Level Sammelan in each State wherein approximately 250 EWRs including the Zilla Pramukhs, Panchayat Samiti Pradhans and at least 5-10 women Sarpanchs from each division will assemble together to discuss and deliberate on issues of local relevance and discuss measures of implementation of the State level charter. The number of Divisional level Sammelans will vary according to the divisions in the State. In States where divisions have not been carved out, groups of 6 neighbouring districts may be clubbed to conduct the Divisional level conference.

5. Meeting of the Executive Body of the PMSA Association

To redefine and continuously sharpen their own agenda for increased impact in their work spheres and for providing a supportive environment for each other in order to better negotiate the male dominated political and administrative milieu in which they function, regular meetings would be convened by the Association.

II. Panchayat Yuva Shakti Abhiyan

As per Constitutional provisions (Article 246) on the distribution of legislative powers, the subject "Youth Affairs" falls under the Union List. It is, therefore, the primary responsibility of the central government to initiate interventions in this matter. To address the needs of the youth who are elected to PRIs, an umbrella campaign called the Panchayat Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PYSA) is being initiated by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports through the Nehru Yuva Kendras. The implementation strategy for forging a partnership with youth for development through Panchayati Raj Institutions should be mutually beneficial. The members of youth clubs will not only be beneficiaries but also the benefactors of the programme. The programme intervention will have the following components:

- i) Sensitization of the members of Youth Clubs and youthful elected representatives of the PRIs through orientation programmes.
- ii) Sharing of information and awareness building between Youth Clubs and PRIs.

It has been planned that the priorities of the Panchayat Yuva Shakti Abhiyan be determined by the youth in the Panchayat. The following issues may be discussed in the Core Committee meeting prior to the PYSA and adopted as a follow up to the Abhiyan:

1. Identification of Programme beneficiaries.
2. Panchayat Khel Kood Abhiyan.
3. Rural Business Hub/Self Help Groups especially for young women.
4. Participation of youth in the Gram Sabhas and Ward Sabhas, to act as a pressure group for approval of programmes and timely submission of Utilization Certificates by the PRIs.
5. Engagement of youth for social audit by the Gram Sabha for greater transparency and prevention of corruption.
6. Sensitization of young Panchayat members on issues of local administration such

as literacy, village library, HIV/AIDS, sex determination and health related issues.

7. The 29 subjects assigned to Panchayats under the 11th Schedule of the Constitution.

6. Setting up of State Support Centres (SSCs)

To create an enabling environment and to make PRIs part of the process for the empowerment of women and youth, State Support Centers will be established in each State/UT with the help of the State Panchayati Raj Department and could be housed with any of the organizations such as State Women's Corporation, State Social Welfare Board, State Chapter of NCW, State Panchayati Raj Department or SIRDs, NYKS or, NGOs, etc. However, final decision regarding where the State Support Centre would be housed be left to the State Panchayati Raj Departments. These State Support Centers would keep updated information related to the participation of EWRs and EYRs in Panchayati Raj Institutions for the entire State and serve as knowledge support institutions. The State Support Centre will be managed directly by the Association of EWRs in partnership with the coordinating agency from the cluster level with the support of and experience of persons from the open market and implementing voluntary organizations as well as the NYKS and Youth Associations. The centre will hire resource persons and experts in the fields of Community Development, Gender Development, Youth Development and so on. These persons resource persons would be utilized for others scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, GoI also under implementation in the State.

7. Sensitization Programme for the EWRs and EYRs

The sensitization programme is primarily aimed at enhancing the capacity of the EWRs and EYRs to take up their new responsibilities as local legislators and decision-makers under Panchayati Raj. The subjects to be covered in such sensitization orientation programmes include PRI Dynamics, Management, Participatory Skills, Leadership Skills, Legal Rights, Conflict Resolution, Record Keeping & Accounts including mastery over Muster Rolls, Measurement Books, Utilization Certificate, Completion Certificates, Social audit, RTI, etc. Out of the total office bearers in District Panchayats and Intermediate Panchayats, a group of 35 including both EWRs and EYRs would be selected. This would be a specialized programme for the Elected Representatives who had been elected more than once, have demonstrated leadership skills and have the potential to carry forward the goal of democratic decentralization through PRIs as envisaged under the 73rd Constitution Amendment. These are also the EWRs and EYRs who are involved in the Sammelans being organized as part PMSA and PYSA.

8. The **Financial Norms** for convening the Core Committee Meetings, State level sammelans, Division and District level sammelans, Meeting of the PMSA Associations etc. are given in the **Annexure**.

9. Procedure for release of funds

The State Government will forward the proposals for release of funds by MoPR for supporting the activities listed in the Scheme. The funds for organizing the State

level/Divisional/District level Sammelan/setting up of SSCs/meetings of associations etc. will be released to the State Panchayati Raj Department in two equal installments in the ratio of 50:50 with the concurrence of the Integrated Finance Division of the Ministry. The first installment of 50% of the total sanctioned amount will be released as an advance for incurring the expenditure on the approved proposals and items.

The accounts of the expenditure shall be maintained by the SSCs for the funds released to them and by the State Panchayati Raj Department for the other items. The balance amount (second installment of 50%) would be released only on furnishing of (1) Utilization certificate in respect of funds released and (2) Audited Statement of account on the expenditure (item-wise) incurred by the State Government/SSC.

10. Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation (I, M&E)

The scheme will be operated by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj as a Central Sector Scheme. At the State level, the Panchayati Raj Department will be the nodal Department to implement the Scheme. The State level coordinating bodies such as NGO/SIRD/ATI/WDC/NYKS would carry forward the mission of the Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA) in the respective States.

There would be a PMEYSA Cell under the Ministry of Panchayati Raj which would correspond with the States, follow up constitution of the Core Committees, process cases for financial sanction and deal with the documentation relating to M&E. The task of M&E of the Scheme and carrying out impact studies would be outsourced to a national level NGO or support organization.

The Monitoring and Evaluation, particularly in such participatory projects, can be undertaken with group-based discussions. However the principles and practices to be applied for M&E cannot be uniformly applied across the country and this has to be taken into account by the independent evaluating firm/agency. However, the following methods may be applied:

- Brainstorming of the EWRs to gain many ideas quickly. It encourages people to think critically and creatively, rather than simply generating a list of options, answers or interests.
- Focus Groups are good for assessing opinions of change, assessing the quality of project services, and identifying areas of improvement.
- SWOT Analysis: To identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to the newly formed associations, and how such an assessment will change over time.

The evaluation process should be such that it provides the EWRs an opportunity to revise and update their work plans and functioning to incorporate new activities, reflect progress and update challenges.

Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan Scheme
Financial Norms

I. (a) Expenditure on Core Committee Meeting: An amount of Rs. 25,000/- will be disbursed to the State government for conducting the State level Core Committee meeting prior to the Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan. Rs. 15,000 additionally will be allowed for the annual working of the Core Committee.

(b) Norms for the State level sammelan

1. Lodging Charges for participants @ Rs. 100/- per head per day.
 2. Boarding Charges for participants @ Rs.100/- per head per day.
 3. T.A. to participants estimated only as per actual bus/train 2nd SL class, for Sarpanchs/Pradhans of Gram Panchayat and bus/train 3rd AC for Chairperson for District and Block Panchayat. Travel by Taxi for Sarpanch and Block Chairpersons are not allowed. The District Panchayat Chairperson may travel by taxi also. In such case the road mileage as admissible under the State Govt.'s rule is reimbursable.
 4. Advertisements & publicity and documentation for the sammelan - Rs. 40,000/- maximum.
 5. Stationery/Invitation Cards/Literature/Kits to the Participants etc. @ Rs.125/- per head per person.
 6. Hiring of Hall for the event for two days, decoration, chairs/tables etc. - Rs. 55,000/- maximum.
 7. Sound System, LCD Projector, Generator, etc. if required - Rs. 10,000/-.
 8. Local Transportation for the participants/dignitaries - on actual basis, subject to the State Govt. Norms Upto maximum of Rs.5000/-.
 9. Miscellaneous/ overhead charges Rs. 25,000/- maximum.
- However, the entire expenditure will be reimbursed on actual basis.

(c) Norms for conducting the Division level sammelan

1. Lodging Charges for participants @ Rs. 100/- per head per day.
2. Boarding Charges for participants @ Rs.100/- per head per day.
3. T.A. to participants estimated only as per actual bus/train 2nd SL class, for Sarpanchs/Pradhans of Gram Panchayat and bus/train 3rd AC for Chairperson for District and Block Panchayat. Travel by Taxi for Sarpanch and Block Chairpersons are not allowed. The District Panchayat Chairperson may travel by taxi also. In such case the road mileage as admissible under the State Govt. rule is reimbursable.
4. Local Transportation for the participants/dignitaries - on actual basis, subject to the State Govt. Norms, upto maximum of Rs.3000/-.
5. Central/State Government Officer's Accommodation - on actual basis.
6. Advertisements & publicity and documentation for the sammelan - Rs. 10,000/- maximum.
7. Stationery/Invitation Cards/Literature/Kits to the Participants etc.@ Rs.75/- per head.
8. Hiring of Hall for the event, decoration, chairs/tables etc. - Rs. 10,000/- maximum.

9. Sound System, LCD Projector, Generator, etc. if required - Rs. 10,000/-
 10. Miscellaneous / Overhead charges Rs. 15,000/- maximum.
 However, the entire expenditure will be reimbursed on actual basis.

II. Expenditure on Meeting of PMSA Association: An amount of Rs. 25,000/- annually will be disbursed to the State Government for conducting the State and Divisional level meetings of the Association and Rs. 15,000/- annually for the District level meetings.

III. Expenditure on sensitization programme of the EWRs and EYRs:

Over and above the systematic awareness-building and sensitization programmes, short term orientation programmes will be organized to enhance the capacity of the EWRs and EYRs to take up their new responsibilities as local legislators and decision-makers under Panchayati Raj. The cost of 2 days sensitization programme per batch of 35 (25 EWRs + 10 EYRs) - Rs. 28,150/-.

IV. Expenditure on Staff and Office Equipment for SSCs

(a) Staff costs (Recurring)

Sl. No.	Post	No. of Staff per SSC	Honorarium per staff per month (in Rupees)
1.	Coordinator - Gender	1	15000
2.	Coordinator - Youth	1	12000
3.	Associates	2	8000

The expenditure on the staff on contractual basis for the SSCs would be paid for by the Ministry through reimbursement rather than in the form of outright grants-in-aid to SSCs.

(b) Procurement of Office Equipment (recurring)

Sl. No.	Head	Start-up Expenditure per SSC (in Rupees)
1.	Tele-Fax connection	3000
2.	Fax Machine	5000
3.	Computer set with Internet	50,000
4.	Furniture	15,000

Besides, the ceiling on the additional recurring expenditure (excluding Staff honorarium) per SSC will be Rs. 18,000/- per month.

V. Implementation Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

For the M&E as also the dissemination of the information relating to the scheme, the outsourced National level NGO or support organization will be given an amount keeping in view norms under the Scheme for Research and Training in the Ministry.